



# Arkansas Department of Health

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Governor Asa Hutchinson

José R. Romero, MD, Interim Secretary of Health

Effective: August 5, 2020

## **Directive for Community and School Sponsored Music Return to Play**

The Secretary of Health, in consultation with the Governor, has sole authority over all instances of quarantine, isolation, and restrictions on commerce and travel throughout Arkansas, as necessary and appropriate to control disease in the state of Arkansas as authorized by Ark. Code Ann. §20-7-109--110. Based on available scientific evidence, it is necessary and appropriate to take further action to ensure that COVID-19 remains controlled and that residents and visitors in Arkansas remain safe.

On March 26, 2020, the Secretary of Health in consultation with the Governor placed limitations on public gatherings. This directive provides requirements for lifting limitations to community and school-based music practicing and performing. The medical and scientific evidence concerning these recommendations is incomplete. Accordingly, this recommendation may require revision as scientific and medical evidence evolves. We refer school district and school leaders to The Performing Arts Aerosol Study Preliminary Report (reference below) for specific guidelines on how to limit spread in the school music setting. One consideration in districts with widespread community COVID-19 spread is to cancel these activities for the autumn of 2020.

This directive is not applicable to intercollegiate or professional music rehearsals, performances or competitions.

### **General Requirements**

- Maintain minimum physical distancing of six feet between participants at all times.
- Musicians, Directors and All Staff must be screened prior to any activity by asking the following questions and excluded if the answer is yes.
  - Have had a fever of 100.4°F in the last 2 days.
  - Have a cough, difficulty breathing, chills, muscle aches (myalgias), sore throat, headache, recent loss of taste or smell, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.
  - Had contact with a person known to be infected with COVID-19 within the previous 14 days.
- In addition, Directors and All Staff must have temperature checked by digital thermometer prior to entry, and those whose temperature is 100.4°F or greater must be excluded.

- Face coverings that completely cover the nose and mouth are required for everyone 10 years of age or older.
  - Musicians and all participating students must wear a face covering. Musicians should maintain appropriate distancing.
  - Directors and Staff shall wear a face covering inside. Appropriate distancing shall be maintained.
- Storage rooms may only be used for storage of personal items. Social distancing of 6 feet must be maintained in the storage rooms.
- Individual practice participants should use their own equipment if possible. School instruments may be assigned to a single student.
- Participants will arrive dressed for rehearsal with their equipment and water for their personal hydration. Participants should leave as soon as the rehearsals are complete. Directors and staff may meet before and after rehearsals to appropriately plan. Appropriate distance should be maintained.
- An alcohol-based hand sanitizer or adequate handwashing facilities are provided for use by all attendees.
- Equipment, restrooms, storage rooms, water fountains and other high touch surfaces should be sanitized frequently during each event and between each use. For a list of cleaning products that will eliminate the Covid-19 virus, visit <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>.
- Avoid personal contact at all times. This includes, but is not limited to, high-fives, hand shaking, and fist bumping.
- For performances, competitions, and other music events held in a facility, the facility hosting the event must follow the current Directive for Large Outdoor Venues or Large Indoor Venues (when playing woodwind and brass is allowed to be moved indoors). Spectators are covered under these Directives.
- Concession Stands may operate but must follow all applicable sections of the Directive for Resuming Restaurant Dine-In Operations.
- Group size should be sufficiently limited to maintain 6 feet between each person, including staff.
- Practice is allowed for participants of any age. However, participants should refrain if:
  - They are 65 years of age or older.
  - They have underlying health conditions including high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, severe obesity, asthma or weakened immunity

In addition to the General Requirements<sup>1</sup>:

- Musician group size should be sufficiently limited to maintain at least 6 feet between each person, including staff. For choral musicians a minimum of 12 feet is required.
- Masks are required for all singers.<sup>2</sup>
- Wind instrument musicians must wear a mask with a slit or a flap for the mouthpiece.<sup>3</sup> Flutists and piccoloists can slide the instrument in the side of the mask.
- Bell covers are highly recommended as "masks" for wind instruments. Bell covers can be made of multi-layered high denier nylon material and provide a barrier for aerosols.<sup>4</sup>
- Distance completely around that of flutists, piccoloists and choral musicians should be 12 feet because of the intensity of the airstream.
- Trombones should have an additional three feet of distancing making their space 9 feet by 6 feet.<sup>1,5</sup>

- Practice and performance, including woodwind and brass instruments and choirs, must be held outdoors at this time.
  - String players, percussionists, and auxiliary units are allowed to practice indoors with appropriate distancing of at least 6 feet and wearing face masks.
  - Swabbing and removal of water from wind instruments must take place outdoors, using a disposable product (such as paper towels or puppy pad) which is placed in a plastic bag and thrown away.
- These Guidelines will continue to be updated as it becomes necessary.

References:

1. [Performing Arts Aerosol Study Preliminary Report](#). For a summary click [here](#).
2. [Singing demonstration with mask](#)
3. [Face mask with flap for wind instrument](#)
4. Bell [covers](#)
5. [Trombone](#) air flow